

Tackling today's policing challenges

Four steps to positive change

There's little doubt the UK police service is facing its biggest set of challenges for more than 50 years.

Funding from central government has been cut by 20 per cent. The public is well aware that community stations are closing. Yet expectations for community visibility and reductions in crime rates are still rising.

So far, the response to these challenges from forces has been positive. Many are already laying down plans to fundamentally change the way they work – either through use of mobile technology, or by sharing locations and IT infrastructure with other emergency services.

The big hope is that these initiatives will address major cost cutting goals – such as the need to spend even less money maintaining buildings – and will give officers more time to spend working in the community.

Moving forward, the real challenge is to build from the foundations and truly transform the way police services operate. Effectively, forces must think smarter; do more with less. They must come up with better processes that reduce admin and provide a more efficient service for the public. While at the same time, produce better results on crime.

In this how-to guide, we suggest practical ways you can tackle these challenges and move forward.



Key police challenges

Work with **challenging budgets** while also improving service delivery

Modernise processes to enable a more responsive service

Find innovative **new ways to engage with citizens** and deliver better results on crime

“Technology has a big role to play in providing that higher level of efficiency and effectiveness, but more importantly improving the service that we provide to the public.”

Cleaven Faulkner, Chief Inspector,
Hampshire Police

While there is no magic formula to solve the challenges police forces are facing, there are four broad areas you can focus on, that will significantly increase your chances of making positive and lasting change.

1	Simplify processes, boost citizen satisfaction	Start by looking at long-established paper-based processes. How they can be improved? For example, we are now seeing mobile technology used to collect witness statements live at the scene . The same tools can be used to carry out instant satisfaction surveys. You eliminate the need for costly back-office data input, but crucially, the public feel you're providing a better and more responsive service .
2	Embrace social media, improve citizen engagement	We've seen dedicated social media monitoring facilities used to provide intelligence support for operational units. Could you use these tools more widely? In a survey by Accenture, 90 per cent of UK respondents said they want to be better informed through social media . Importantly, they also said they want to use services like Facebook and Twitter to providing more help to their local force.
3	Reduce money you spend on buildings	Many forces are already reducing the number of offices and stations they have. But how do you do this without impacting service? We recommend a profiling programme that enables you to work out what your officers do in a day to generate results. And based on that, who really needs access to a building and when. This information will allow you to considerably rationalise your property estate while maintaining an effective service for citizens .
4	Cut admin and give officers more time in the community	One sure way to improve visibility on the streets and spend more time tackling crime is to free up officers from unnecessary admin and travel . Enabling front line officers to work more flexibly – giving them the ability to work with your office based systems and records without returning to the station – can save multiple hours per officer per day.



Want to find out more?

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Cleaven Faulkner, Chief Inspector, Hampshire Police

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